 **STUDENT WELLBEING AND
 ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school and Federation policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Wodonga West Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school’s values.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

**Contents**

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Shared expectations
7. Student behavioural expectations an management
8. Engaging with families
9. Evaluation

**Policy**

1. **SCHOOL PROFILE**

Wodonga West Primary School is part of the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools and as such we have a number of policies which are followed across the government schools within the Federation. Currently our school has a population between 220-250.

The school has new modern facilities which were finished in 2016. On site we have a school operated Early Learning Centre which offers both 3 and 4 year old programs and provides a seamless transition to primary school. Within the early learning centre is an allied health space which can be utilised by services working with students and families in our school and kinder. Our learning spaces offer furnishings and technology as expected for 21st century learning. We also have a large Resource Centre, climate controlled gymnasium and a visual and performing arts studio. In addition the school has Out of School Hours Childcare facility which is operated by an external company ‘Their Care’. In 2019 we celebrated ten years of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program in our school which is exemplified by our 5 station kitchen and a substantial produce garden complete with chooks. This is complemented by a Wood fired oven and a Community Parterre Garden both situated next to the Wodonga Toy Library which also operates from a building on our site.

Our students are fortunate to have extensive, spacious grounds with 3 modular playground pieces some with shade areas. We also have a huge outside sheltered area adjacent to the gymnasium which is known as the Gunyah.

Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds with one quarter of the student population identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders or from an EAL (English as another Language) background (predominantly Vietnamese). We have a part time EAL teacher to support students within the school from this community. Our students enjoy specialist classes in the visual and performing arts, physical education and science as well as Indonesian being taught from F-6 by a native speaker. Advancement by Individual Determination (AVID) which is a system of strategies to promote success and lifelong learning as well as Bluearth a holistic wellbeing program and other innovative programs taught from F-6 in our school.

Wodonga West Primary constantly strives to build and maintain positive connections with our families and the wider community as we embrace the concept of “It takes a Village to raise a Child” from 0-12 years.

1. **SCHOOL VALUES, PHILOSPHY AND VISION**

Our School vision is “Learning for Living” and everything we do is designed to develop lifelong learners.

Our school community have been committed to implementing the School Wide Positive Behaviour approach (SWPBS) since 2012. The three school values are:

Be safe

Be respectful

Be a learner

These 3 values form the basis of everything we do. This means we continually teach, model, practise, acknowledge and correct all behaviour. All students & staff, in all settings follow these behavioural expectations.

The School Wide Positive Behaviour Program is underpinned by the following:

* A broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviour with all students
* The redesign of environments to achieve success
* The teaching of specific behaviour expectations, not relating to problem behaviour
* Innovating and considering what we will do differently to teach children about appropriate social and learning behaviour
* About looking for and rewarding appropriate and positive behaviour
* A statement of purpose, behaviour expectations and a behaviour matrix that the whole school uses to teach students about appropriate behaviour

The School Wide Positive Behaviour Program is driven by:

* Data collected from the classroom and from the yard
* Buy-in from staff, students, families
* Evaluation
* Environmental change
* Effective working systems
* Practise

Our staff have developed the following statement to articulate our philosophy for teaching:

*Our aim is to be consistent and provide a supportive learning environment where all children are in an engaging classroom. Students at WWPS will be equipped for life through the teaching and growth of life skills. The development of strong interpersonal skills, will be rewarded with positive relationships, warmth and friendships. The confidence and resilience this fosters, will enrich the belief, that each individual is special: a unique and valued member of our school community.*

*Being organised, and yet flexible both mentally and physically, will allow Wodonga West students to tackle academic skills in literacy, numeracy, the arts, and knowledge of the wider world. An environment rich in ICT resources will support the students in their journey. Developing a global knowledge, and an empathy for cultures, will enrich the mind and heart. Students will be well rounded and immersed in all forms of learning. This will lead to an understanding of personal strengths and development of thinking skills, thus empowering the creativity of individuals to face life’s challenges.*

*In an ever changing world, an awareness and passion for the environment will be fostered. Our students will develop healthy minds and bodies through a balance of active, passive and creative activities. Students will achieve success through developing respect, responsibility and cooperation which will allow them to make connections with the world.*

1. **WELLBEING ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

Wodonga West Primary has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated.

The school has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, and inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school to support the components of student engagement, Wodonga West Primary school has a qualified, dedicated teaching staff committed to securing the best possible learning outcomes for all students. The school takes every opportunity to broaden students’ experiences. All students are able to participate in an environment which rewards adherence to our school wide expectations. Students are expected to display a commitment to being safe, being respectful and being a learner. We are rigorous in aiming to improve student engagement. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

1. ***Universal Strategies in:***

**Curriculum:**

* Dedicated Literacy and Numeracy blocks with Instructional Placemats from Foundation to Year 6 to ensure students have the necessary academic skills to access broader learning
* Ongoing assessment, fluid groupings and differentiated tasks guided by Learning Intentions and Success Criteria and individual student or co constructed learning goals where applicable
* Comprehensive Rich Tasks developed to implement the Victorian Curriculum which are designed around higher order thinking and technological involvement
* Implementation of Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden to ensure students are able to access life-long skills of healthy living in a pleasurable and real life manner and to utilise real life literacy and numeracy skills (Yrs 1-6)
* Specialist programs in Visual and Performing Art, Physical Education and Science
* We are a certified AVID (Advancement by Individual Determination) site and our qualified staff utilise the system of organisation and learning strategies to optimise students’ chances of academic and lifelong success. This program is utilised from Foundation to year 6 and flows through into the local Middle Years and Senior Secondary College.
* All staff are trained Bluearth facilitators which is a program offering a holistic approach to physical activity and well-being
* Our school wide expectations of “Be safe, be respectful and be a learner” are explicitly taught, reviewed and rewarded as part of SWPBS. Weekly Respectful Relationship lessons are taught
* Student learning occurs at point of individual need as teachers adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching

**Organisation:**

* A variety of multi-age classes which are designed based on the best outcomes for students across the school
* High and consistent expectations of all staff, students, parents and carers
* Prioritisation of positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
* Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
* Creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
* Welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
* A whole school house system operates across year levels enabling values/expectations to be reinforced in the yard with a system of ‘links ‘being awarded to students and leading to term reward. The three houses are Earth, Fire, Water
* Houses offer an opportunity for multi-age activities and the building or wider peer relationships across the school
* Classrooms and units have a reward system usually based around Dojos and this system is also transferable into Specialist classes to reinforce our values/expectations
* Specialists teachers also have a system of acknowledging class rewards for our expectations at assemblies
* Semester Learning awards and specific ‘High Achiever’ awards for students who have achieved highly in a non-academic area or in pursuit of their own interests outside of school are acknowledged at assemblies and by a High Achiever badge
* Our day is divided into a timetable which maximises productive learning time in the morning and allows for dedicated 2hr literacy and 1 hr numeracy block
* Our daily teaching timetable is 2 hrs, 2hrs and 1 hr. Students are supervised during lunch and snack eating and by yard duty teachers during our two recess breaks outside (40 mins and 20 mins respectfully
* our school’s Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
* measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.
* Attendance and lateness is closely monitored each term by leadership and wellbeing staff.
* We analyse and where possible respond to a range of school data including Attitudes to School Survey, Parent Opinion survey Student management data and School Level assessment data
* Transition between kinder and primary and primary and secondary have dedicated personnel to oversee these programs. Transition between grade levels is also considered and planned for in term 4 of each year with a designated school transition activity/day.
* Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Leadership Council and through a Suggestion box (open to the whole school community)
* The SLC (Student Lead Council) have input into school base decisions and work closely with leadership and wellbeing staff to coordinate and run whole school assemblies, gather data and organise student fundraising events.
* The student voice group also allows for student input in school based decisions and have support to implement student lead change projects through the teach the teacher program each year.
* The Resource Centre is open before school and at both breaks for students who want to use this resource or find a quiet indoor spot
* Lunch time programs are on offer at different times throughout the year including structured friendship group games.

**Support Personnel:**

* All staff share responsibility for all students and are expected to acknowledge and manage student behaviour
* A full time Student Wellbeing Officer is employed and is able to be accessed by all students
* The Principal Class assume shared responsibility for all intervention actions not manageable at classroom level
* The NEV Region has SSSO’s (Student Support Service Officers) which can be accessed if needed
1. ***Targeted Strategies***

It is acknowledged that at different times different cohorts may need specific strategies to address particular concerns or friendship circles. The following are examples of the types of targeted support programs which may be used for different groups within the school:

* Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our RAP for further information
* our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through being able to access information in their first language via Class dojo
* we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through access to a learning mentor and regular small group sessions with EAL tutors to promote inclusion in the school and support English language development. The wellbeing coordinator also works alongside families and students who may need additional support as part of our usual whole school referral pathways for additional wellbeing supports.
* we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department’s policy on [LGBTIQ Student Supports including explicit teaching of the respectful relationships curriculum](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy)
* all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department’s policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supporting-students-out-home-care/policy) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
* students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department’s policy on [Students with Disability](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
* students enrolled under the Department’s international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/international-student-program/guidance/supporting-students-learning-and-engagement-section-7)
* Foundation Students are linked with buddies at transition time and into their first year.
* Programs offered by our Student Wellbeing Officer such as ‘Girlfriends,’ Seasons for Growth
* Staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
* Staff will utilise language support strategies for students with a language delay
* Staff will utilise social stories and visual timetables/first then charts to support learning & classroom interactions.
* Intervention groups in evidence based practices may be implemented as part of the school curriculum for identified groups e.g. sounds write, language support or social skills groups overseen by the speech pathologists

***C. Individual interventions:***

Wodonga West Children’s Centre implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. We aim to build constructive relationships with students at risk or who are vulnerable due to complex circumstances as well as with their families/guardians. These supports can include:

* Holding meetings with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
* Developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
* Considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up or including break times, movement breaks, visual timetables etc.
* Exploring individualised support for educational purposes through funding under the PSD program (if eligible).
* Referring the student to:
	+ school-based wellbeing supports
	+ Student Support Services
	+ Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
	+ Re-engagement programs

Where necessary the school will support the student’s family to engage by:

* being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student’s circumstances and health and wellbeing
* collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
* monitoring individual student attendance and developing strategies in collaboration with the student and their family
* engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
* running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
* with a disability
* in Out of Home Care
	+ and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.
1. **IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN NEED OF SUPPORT**

Wodonga West Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. As a smaller school we pride ourselves on the Leadership and Student Wellbeing Officer knowing all students, their families and their background. Staff are encouraged to adopt the mantra- ‘It takes a Village to raise a child’. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Wodonga West Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

* personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
* attendance records
* academic performance
* observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
* attendance, detention and suspension data
* engagement with families/self-referrals
1. **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Wodonga West Primary community is guided by the following principles:

* All members of our school community have the right to be safe
* All members have the right to be treated with respect
* All members have the right to be in a secure environment without interference, intimidation, harassment, bullying or disruption to maximise learning opportunities

We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school’s Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RIGHTS** | **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| **STUDENTS HAVE:** | **STUDENTS NEED:** |
| 1. The right to feel safe at school
 | To stay within the designated areas around the schoolTo obey school rules and follow adult instructions |
| 1. The right to learn without interference from others
 | To attend class prepared to learn and not interfere with the learning of others |
| 1. The right to be treated with respect and in a fair and equitable manner free from harassment
 | To treat others with respect and resolve differences through discussion and compromise and not conflict |
| 1. The right to expect your property to be safe
 | To take care of your own and other people’s property |
| 1. The right to express their feelings, needs and concerns
 | To listen to their peers and respect their wishes. To seek out help and discuss issues with a trusted adult at school at the time they happen |
| **TEACHERS HAVE:** | **TEACHERS NEED:** |
| 1. The right to be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and cooperation
 | To ensure they are punctual and prepared for lessons |
| 1. The right to be treated with respect and in a fair and equitable manner free from harassment
 | To display mutual respect to other staff, parents and students |
| **PARENTS HAVE:** | **PARENTS NEED:** |
| 1. The right to expect that their child will be educated in a safe and secure environment where care, courtesy and respect for others is encouraged
 | To treat all members of the school community with respect and support teachers in their maintenance of a safe, secure, productive teaching and learning environment.To ensure their child is sent to school, in school uniform, with a healthy lunch and snack and well rested to maximise learning |

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

1. **STUDENT BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS AND MANAGEMENT**

At Wodonga West Primary we strive to provide an educational environment that ensures all students are valued and cared for and are engaged effectively in their learning and can experience success.

The Matrix below outlines the expect behaviours at Wodonga West Children’s Centre of everyone and is based on the three school values.



Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Wodonga West Children’s Centre’s Bullying policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Wodonga West Children’s Centre School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department’s Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines and Behaviour policy. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures that may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student’s behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently.

The school has clearly defined what will constitute minor and major behaviour and is included in the chart below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Minor Issues** | **Major Issues** |
| Behaviour | Definition | Example | Behaviour | Definition | Example |
| Physical Contact | Accidental or careless contact resulting in harm. | Collision in playground, football tackle | Fighting | Engaging in deliberate physical aggression | Intentionally punching, kicking, throwing people to the ground |
| Out of bounds | In one of the designated out of bounds areas. | In the garden without an adult | Exiting school grounds | Leaving the school grounds without teacher or parent permission | Over the fence, down the stairs, on Lawrence St, etc. |
| Cheating | Not playing or completing a task by the rules. | Copying someone else’s work | Arson | Lighting fires with intent to cause damage. | Playing with matches/lighters or actually lighting a fire. |
| Minor Property Damage | Damaging or destroying property/equipment that is not theirs. | Ripping up someone’s work, drawing on a table. | Verbal abuse | Yelling and/or swearing directly at another person. | You fat cow! |
| Late to class**\*** | Not returning to class at the appropriate time. | Student entering classroom 5mins or more after the bell. Loitering outside. | Use of weapons | Using an object in a threatening manner towards another person | Using a ruler/stick to hurt another student. Threatening someone with a knife. |
| Exit from class**\*** | Leaving the designated teaching area without teacher permission. | Absconding to the playgrounds, not being where they should be or supervised. | Vandalism | Intentional actions against property which result in damage. | Intentionally breaking a window. |
| Lying**\*** | Not telling the truth. | Blaming someone else. | Technology violation | Not using technology devices in a safe, respectful and appropriate way as per User Agreement. | Unnecessary printing, accessing inappropriate sites, using technologies as a tool to intimidate or bully, causing damage to equipment |
| Swearing**\*** | Inappropriate language, not particularly directed at another person. | Unacceptable words or language used in an inappropriate way | Harassment/bullying | Ongoing actions against person/persons by the perpetrator.  | Exclusion, taunting, physical contact, cyberbullying. |
| Forgery/theft**\*** | Signing a document as someone else. Intentionally taking something that is not yours. | Signing a note from home as a parent. Taking money or things that belong to someone else | Racism | Vilification or inappropriate behaviour based on race | Racist names or slurs, exclusion based on colour or cultural background |
| Disruption**\*** | Distracting others from their learning | Yelling, throwing objects, making silly noises or gestures. | Sexualised behaviour/comments | Behaviours or comments that are sexually explicit or imply sexual acts. | Exposing self or others. Performing or pretending to perform sexual acts. Saying sexually explicit things. |
| Gang affiliation**\*** | 3 or more students that get into trouble and intimidate other students as a group | Intimidating students to join their group or get picked on. Exclusion of students for not being in the gang |  |  |  |
| Climbing furniture**\*** | Climbing on furniture | Student climbing a bookcase |  |  |  |
| Defiance/disrespect/non-compliance**\*** | Not following the directions of an adult | Ignoring directions, refusal to participate in school tasks / activities, being rude, non-verbal response such as eye rolling or walking off |  |  |  |
| **\*** Incidents that usually start as minor incident, but can escalate and become a major incident |  |

The following flow chart identifies the steps that can be taken by staff to address **minor** behaviours when observed in the classroom as a strategy to help improve and redirect student behaviour.



Disciplinary measures that may be applied for major behaviours include:

* warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
* teacher controlled consequences such as time out
* withdrawal of privileges
* referral to Leadership-consistent with our Minor and Major behaviours matrix
* restorative conversations
* detentions
* behaviour meetings and review of individual data
* suspension
* expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Wodonga West Children’s Centre is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

1. **ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES**

Wodonga West Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child’s learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

* ensuring all parents have a password provided to access our School Communication app (COMPASS)
* ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
* maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
* providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
* involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
* involving families in school decision making with opportunities to be involved on School Council and Parents, Family and Friends Committee
* coordinating resources and services from the community for families
* including families in Student Support Groups, and developing Individual Education plans for students where applicable
1. **EVALUATION**

Wodonga West Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

* Attitudes to School student survey data (years 4-6)
* SWPBS data collected via COMPASS system
* School reports
* Parent Opinion survey
* Case management
* CASES21
* SOCS

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

* Available publicly on our school’s website
* Included in staff induction processes
* Included in transition and enrolment packs
* Included as annual reference in school newsletter
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department’s policies at:

**Further information and resources**

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

Federation of Government School Attendance Policy

Federation Child Safe Code of Conduct

WWPS Communication with families and the wider Community Policy

Federation of Government Schools Digital Technologies Policy

Federation Bullying Prevention Policy

WWPS Statement of Values and School Philosophy

**Review cycle**

***This policy was last updated in June 2022 and is scheduled for review in June 2024.***